

FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS - ideas for partnering with your child's school for student wellbeing

All policies cited in this document can be found on our website: mn.catholic.edu.au/policies

At Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle, we believe that children flourish when the adults who care for them work together with shared purpose. Parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators, and you know your child better than anyone else.

When families and schools work in partnership, and when home and school send consistent, predictable messages about expectations, values and relationships, children and young people experience the safety and stability that supports both wellbeing and learning.

At the heart of this work is a simple belief: every young person has inherent dignity and worth. Your child is loved, they belong in our schools, and they deserve to feel safe, supported and known every day. When children feel known, valued and connected, they engage more confidently and are better able to navigate challenges.

Strong, trusting relationships between families and schools are central to this sense of belonging. Sharing insights, communicating openly and working together allows school staff to better understand each child's strengths, interests and needs, and helps students develop confidence, connection and a deep sense that they are supported by the adults around them.

The information below outlines practical ways families and schools can partner together to support children's wellbeing, learning and growth.

What effective family-school partnerships look like

Show that you value learning and school life

Children feel more secure and confident when they know the important adults in their lives value their education. Speaking positively about school, asking about different parts of your child's day, attending school events where possible, and maintaining consistent routines all reinforce the message that school is a safe and supportive place.

Create consistency between home and school

When children receive the same messages about kindness, respect, effort and responsibility from both home and school, they are better able to understand expectations

and make positive choices. Supporting school approaches at home and modelling the values you hope to see in your child helps create this sense of consistency.

Reach out early when worries arise

You never need to wait for a concern to become "big" before contacting the school. Whether it is a friendship difficulty, a learning concern or a change in behaviour, early communication allows supports to be put in place gently and proactively. Staff are here to listen, work with you and guide next steps.

Work together through challenges

All children experience ups and downs, and sometimes they need extra support. Approaching challenges with a collaborative spirit, focusing on what will help your child and how home and school can work together, helps young people feel surrounded by adults who care for them and believe in them.

Celebrate progress, not just outcomes

Acknowledging effort, growth and small achievements helps build resilience and motivation. Sharing these moments with the school also strengthens connection and reminds students that the adults around them are united in supporting their success.

Staying informed and involved in school life

Partnership is strongest when families feel informed and connected. We encourage families to engage regularly with school communications such as newsletters, Compass posts, emails and social media updates.

These communications help you stay aware of learning experiences, wellbeing initiatives, important dates and opportunities for involvement. Being informed also supports meaningful conversations at home and helps families feel confident about what is happening at school.

Our schools are places where families are welcome and belong. We value family involvement in ways that suit your interests, availability and capacity. This may include attending school events, engaging in learning celebrations, participating in Family and Community

Engagement (FACE) forums, or connecting with other families. Your presence and participation help shape strong, connected school communities.

Learning conversations and progress updates

Parent–teacher interviews, student-led conferences, school reports and learning updates are important partnership opportunities. These moments help build shared understanding about your child’s progress, strengths and next steps for learning and wellbeing.

We encourage families to engage in these conversations and see them as collaborative. Your questions, observations and insights are welcomed and valued.

Staying connected through open communication

Our schools welcome communication from families and encourage you to reach out if you have questions or concerns. Small updates from home, such as changes in mood, friendship worries, behaviour shifts or family circumstances, help staff better understand how your child is feeling and how they can be supported.

Who to contact at your child’s school

In primary schools

- **Classroom teacher** for learning, behaviour, wellbeing or day-to-day concerns.
- **Assistant Principal or Principal** for sensitive matters or significant concerns.
- **School office** for general enquiries, financial queries, administrative questions, attendance, permissions or to request an appointment.

In secondary schools

- **Leader of Wellbeing and Engagement (LOWE)** for wellbeing, behaviour or pastoral matters.
- **Subject teachers** for questions about learning or progress in individual courses.
- **Assistant Principal Wellbeing** for sensitive matters or significant concerns.
- **School office** for general enquiries, financial queries, administrative questions, attendance permissions or to request an appointment.

Choosing the communication method that works best

Email is helpful for brief updates, non-urgent questions or sharing information that may assist staff in supporting your child.

Phone calls can be useful when a matter needs clarification, when you are unsure who to contact or, if you prefer verbal conversations.

Meetings, in person or online, are helpful when concerns are more detailed or emotional. School staff will work with you to arrange a suitable time.

If a matter involves immediate risk to your child or someone else, please contact the school office directly so the appropriate staff can respond quickly.

Your privacy matters

We understand that sharing information about your child requires trust. Any personal information you provide will be treated confidentially and respectfully.

Information is shared only with those who need it to support your child’s learning, safety or wellbeing and is stored securely in line with diocesan policy and legal obligations.

A message for our families

Thank you for your partnership. Your involvement in your child’s learning and wellbeing is deeply valued and makes a meaningful difference in their growth and long-term success.

We are here for you at every step. If you ever have questions or need support, please reach out to your child’s school. Your child’s success is not only a responsibility we share, but also a joy.

Student Wellbeing in Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle

At Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle, your child’s wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do.

Our schools are communities built on faith, respect and genuine care; places where every young person is known, valued and supported to thrive.

Our approach is guided by Catholic identity and shaped by clear policies and practices that nurture student wellbeing, positive relationships and safe behaviour in every school day.

As parents in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, by enrolling your child in one of our schools, you can expect the following:

- A school community for your child that is explicitly

Catholic and unambiguously student-centred, where wellbeing and learning are woven together each day.

- Consistent use of Positive Behaviours for Learning and transparent responses to bullying and unsafe behaviour.
- Safe behaviour planning that restores safety and relationships when harm occurs.
- Authentic avenues for student voice and leadership that build confidence and responsibility.
- A safeguarding culture that meets diocesan, state, and national standards, with prompt reporting and rigorous processes.
- A home-school partnership in which you are respected as the primary carer of your child.